

# DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS



## **MATTHEW WESAW, DIRECTOR**

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[www.michigan.gov/mdcr](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr)

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The Michigan Civil Rights Commission was created by the Michigan Constitution of 1963 to carry out the guarantees against discrimination articulated in Article I, Section 2. As further stated in Article V, Section 29, the state constitution directs the commission to investigate alleged discrimination against any person because of religion, race, color, or national origin and to “secure the equal protection of such civil rights without such discrimination.” Public Acts 453 and 220 of 1976 and subsequent amendments have added sex, age, marital status, height, weight, arrest record, genetic disposition, and physical and mental disabilities to the original four protected categories.

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights was established in 1965 to provide a staff complement to the policy-making responsibilities of the commission. In 1991, the department was expanded when the Michigan Women’s Commission was transferred from the Department of Management and Budget to this agency by executive order. In April 2011, the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission, the Hispanic/Latino Commission and the Division on Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing were moved to MDCR, also through executive order. In 2014, the State ADA Compliance Director and staff were transferred to MDCR from the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget.

The Department of Civil Rights enforces the state’s protections against illegal discrimination primarily by investigating discrimination complaints. The department works to prevent discrimination through programs that promote voluntary compliance with civil rights laws and provides information and services to businesses on diversity initiatives, procurement opportunities and equal employment law. Staff and allies also work to prevent discrimination through statewide educational initiatives on bullying awareness, eradicating hate crimes, building community response to bias-related incidents, improving living and working conditions for migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and through the Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust (ALPACT) groups across Michigan.

The department has offices in Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, Lansing and Marquette. A complaint may be filed at any of the department’s offices, if the alleged discrimination has occurred within the past 180 days; complaints may also be filed online: [www.michigan.gov/mdcr](http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr).

